

**REMARKS**

Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for the careful consideration give to this application. Claims 1-28 are pending in the present case. The Examiner has restricted claims in the application into three distinct inventions designated as Group I, claims 1-11, 15-17, 19 and 21-28 drawn to a sintered porous composite material usable as a filter element, an apparatus for removing contaminants from a fluid stream, and a method for removing material from a fluid, Group II claims 12-14 drawn to a method for making a porous composite material, and Group III claims 18 and 20, drawn to a supercritical fluid.

In order to be fully responsive, Applicant has elected the invention of Group I as defined by claims 1-11, 15-17 and 21-28. Applicant expressly reserves the right to present claims 12-44 of Group II and claims 18 and 20 of Group III, or other claims, in one or more divisional, continuation, or continuation-in-part applications at a later date. By this election, Applicant does not admit, nor does Applicant waive the right to argue against at a later date, the Examiner's statement that the groups of inventions are patentably distinct.

In view of the above remarks, Applicants believe that the application is in condition for examination and/or allowance on the merits.

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No. 4484 P. 9

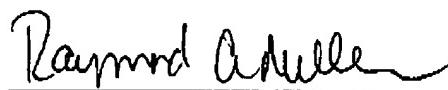
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This response has been timely filed. Accordingly, no fee is required. In the event that a fee is required for this response, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge such fees to Deposit Account No. 50-0436.

Should the Examiner have any questions or comments, or need any additional information from Applicant's attorney, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at their convenience.

Respectfully submitted,



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